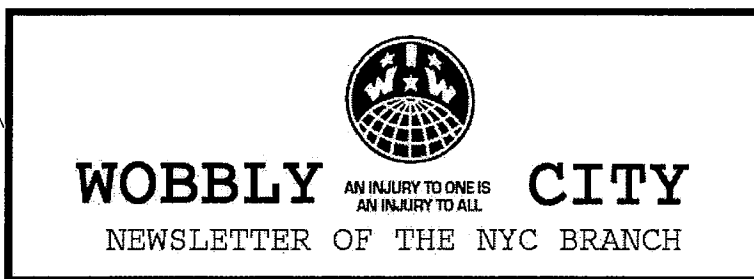


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Kosher Distributor Faces Labor Court Hearing By Marissa Brostoff, The Forward



June 13, 2008

From [The Forward](#):

Just weeks after the nation's largest kosher slaughterhouse made national news for problems with its workers, a kosher food distributor in Brooklyn has become caught up in an escalating dispute with its employees.

Flaum Appetizing fired nearly half its 45 employees May 28. According to Alvin Blyer, the Brooklyn regional director of the National Labor Relations Board, the employees had gone on strike in support of a co-worker who had been fired two days earlier for alleged involvement in a protest against the company's labor policies. When they tried to return to work, they were told their jobs had been terminated.

"For now, I am not working, nor are any of my comrades," said Irma Juarez, a Flaum employee who was among those fired. "The majority doesn't want to go back, because we feel there was a lot of injustice done. Some feel that we could go back. But this can only happen if we all go back."

Aviram Chen, a manager of the company, declined to comment on the situation.

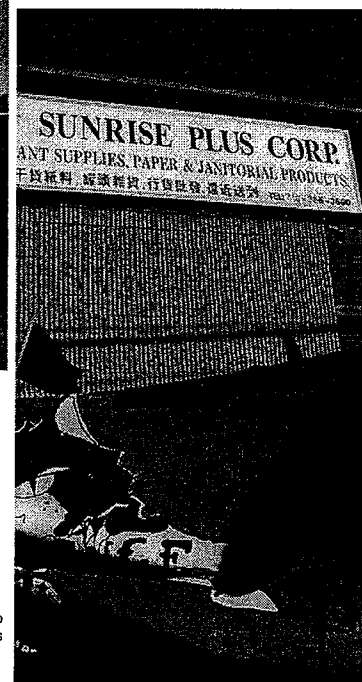
In the past year, a number of Jewish organizations, led by Conservative movement rabbis, have suggested that consumers should consider the labor and environmental conditions behind kosher food. A union that is affiliated with the workers at Flaum has made similar arguments in its protests of the company. In a pamphlet handed out to shoppers outside Zabar's, a gourmet supermarket on Manhattan's Upper West Side, the union said, "Flaum Appetizing Corp. strictly observes Halakha (Jewish Law) with regard to food, but arrogantly defies its teachings (and State and federal laws) concerning treatment of workers."

Flaum has done business in Brooklyn for 90 years and specializes in smoked fish products and an array of side dishes. It has a storefront in a heavily Hasidic part of Williamsburg and distributes its products under its own brand name and other labels.

The NLRB, a government organization that investigates labor disputes, has been investigating Flaum for several months. The organization late last year issued a complaint against the company for its response to unionization efforts, and is now considering whether to file an additional complaint over the recent dismissals.

"Employers cannot lawfully fire employees for protesting," Blyer said. He added that this was the case regardless of whether the employees were protesting a lawful or unlawful dismissal of a co-worker.

E-Z Supply Ordered to Pay IWWs An IU 460 Legal Update By Stephanie Basile



June 02, 2008

From [Industrial Worker](#), June 2008

Since the IWW Industrial Union 460 began organizing warehouses 3 years ago, we've organized in ten warehouses with degrees of success. One issue at every shop has been failure to comply with wage and hour laws.

Many companies have retaliated by firing workers for Workers have fought back through strikes, pickets, selective legal action, among other tactics. We find it most effective when combined with these other methods viewed as a means and not an end. This is a report - but readers should understand that legal action is or workers are using to win their demands.

About a year and a half after we began utilizing legal favorable rulings have recently come down and several have been reached. Since the rulings have just come down not yet begun making payments.

Handyfart Trading (now called HDF Trading)

Six workers were awarded a total of \$360,000. The company made a motion to require Handfart to pay interest and legal fees raise the total amount.

E-Z Supply (now called Sunrise Plus)

Thirteen workers were awarded a total of \$1,068,000. The company has tried to escape liability by forming a new corporation. The union has made a motion to define Sunrise Plus as E-Z Supply, which would hold Sunrise Plus liable.

The upheaval at Flaum comes after a long series of controversies over the labor conditions at Agriprocessors, the nation's largest kosher slaughterhouse, located in Postville, Iowa. After years of complaints about the working conditions at the plant, in mid-May nearly 400 undocumented workers were arrested in a raid conducted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. There does not appear to be a connection between the two cases, although most of the Flaum employees, like those at Agriprocessors, are immigrants from Latin America.

The Flaum employees have been attempting to join the International Workers of the World union for the past year. According to IWW organizer Billy Randel, the unionization effort prompted the company to meet some worker demands regarding vacation days, wages and overtime pay, but also led the company to harass workers involved in unionizing and to intimidate others.

According to Blyer, after the NLRB files its complaint, the company will either come to a settlement with its workers or will face trial in an administrative law court.

judgment against E-Z Supply.

Giant Big Apple

Fifteen of seventeen workers have settled. The fifteen of \$325,000. The remaining two have yet to settle.

Amersino

Fifteen of sixteen workers have settled. Due to a contract agreement, the union is unable to disclose the amount.

Top City Produce

The company was investigated by the New York Attorney General's office. Negotiations are currently under way.

Wild Edibles

In September 2007, sixteen workers filed a lawsuit over overtime pay and retaliation. An additional eight workers joined the case. The plaintiffs are set to request class action status, which would expand coverage in the case to all current and former employees going back six years.

A few months after the suit was filed, a federal judge granted an injunction ordering the company not to retaliate against workers who joined the union. The company has since allegedly violated the injunction several times, and the workers' lawyers are seeking to hold the company in contempt of court. To date, eight workers involved in the case have been fired or discharged.

Flaum Appetizing

A back wage case is proceeding against the company. The company has since allegedly violated the injunction several times, and the workers' lawyers are seeking to hold the company in contempt of court. To date, eight workers involved in the case have been fired or discharged.

Penang Restaurant

Penang, a Malaysian restaurant in the Upper East Side, closed in the summer of 2007. Workers at the restaurant had been paid below minimum wage when they chose to join the union. The IWW issued a heavy flyer campaign outside the restaurant, but the boss refused to honor an agreement with the union.

HWH

HWH changed its name twice before closing down in 2007. It was one of the most slave-like warehouses in the industry. HWH put in as many as 116 hours per week, with drivers working 12 days in a row with no time off. The union reached an agreement with the company in July 2007. Shortly after, HWH locked out the workers and changed its name to Dragonland, and then to US Green Growers for good.

Jim Crutchfield, Daniel Gross, and Billy Randel continue...

About the Union:

The Industrial Workers of the World, NYC

General Membership Branch meets the first Sunday of each month at 2pm.

Industrial Union 460/640 meets the first Monday of each month at 6:30pm.

Meetings are held at 44-61 11th Street 3rd Floor Long Island City, NY 11101.

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